

# The Infancy Narrative of Luke

## 1:5-25 - The Annunciation of the coming births - 1:26-38

Pious parents who do not expect a child are surprised by a heavenly messenger with news of an impending birth of a son. The news is troubling, but they are told not to fear. The name of the child is given by God. They are told the child will be great and bring Israel to God. A sign to prove this is asked for and given.

The second child outranks the first in: being conceived in a more amazing way, holding a higher office, the sign is positive.

## 1:39-56 The Visitation

Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, and Elizabeth, and her child (!) praises Mary. Mary testifies to God, foretelling the work of her child.

- ▼ *Speeches are used to reinforce themes of the gospel*
- ▼ *The nature and means of the political upheaval that these children foretell*
- ▼ *Again, Jesus' higher rank is shown by the praise of Mary by Elizabeth.*

## 1:57-58 - The Birth of the Children - 2:1-20

1. The time for the birth arrives  
(John: 1:57a: personal time: the "fulfillment" of 9 months; Jesus: 2:1-6: the context of the Roman Empire)
  - { *census: cf. Acts 5:36 - gets Nazareth to Bethlehem (the town of David)*
  - { *Empire: who is the real bringer of peace? Augustus or Jesus, yet parents obey the laws (cf. Matthew)*
2. The births are recounted (1:57b: without incident; 2:7: in a humble way)
  - { *"wrapped in cloth": echo of laid in tomb?*
3. The children become known (1:58: in a normal way to family, 2:8-20: via heavenly manifestation to representatives of the nation)

## 1:59-80 - The Circumcision and growth of the Children - 2:21-52

1. The children are circumcised and named (1:59-64; 2:21-24 and purified)
2. People praise God and prophesy (1:65-79: neighbors and the father; 2:25-38: outsiders)
3. The children grow (1:80: in an ordinary way; 2:39-52: in a special way)

### **Themes of the section**

Order, stately order: "at the right time", symmetry, foreshadowing

Promise (prophecy) of fulfillment

1:1-4 - promise of orderly account

1:13, 1:31 - promise of children

1:48-55 - promise of what Jesus will do

1:67-79 - the oath to Abraham will be fulfilled

Nature of the liberation of the messiah

1:48-55 - justice

1:67-79 - salvation from enemies

Jerusalem (foreshadowing the journey)

1:8 - John linked to Jerusalem

2:23, 2:41 - Jesus' linked to Jerusalem

### **Issues**

Opposed or consistent with Roman authority?

Opposed to consistent with being a pious Jew?